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COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT

TOPIC Neuruppin Airfield

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REMARKS This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. At 0545 on 11 July 1955, an alert was practiced at Neuruppin airfield. The jet fighters were towed to the revetments and parked there. Two jet fighters were seen at the eastern end of the runway. One Il-28 was parked in front of the large southeastern hangar. No air activity was observed.

Intensive air activity by jet fighters was observed on 21 July.

2. The following air activity and aircraft were observed at Neuruppin airfield between 20 July and 17 August 1955:
20 July. Between 0755 and 1500, there was air activity by jet fighters including individual local flights and dives in the Hasenberg area. At 1830, one Il-28 took off heading toward south-southeast. Between 2000 and 2345, there was night air activity while searchlights were in operation. One jet fighter without position lights took off. One searchlight tried to catch the flying aircraft. If the searchlight was slow in catching the plane, the aircraft gave short flashes with its nose searchlight. After the first searchlight had caught the plane, the other searchlights were switched on. Shortly after the first jet fighter took off, the next plane started and made approaches without position lights against the jet fighter which had been caught by the searchlights. The aircraft used for target representation headed from southeast to northwest and from northwest to southeast, crossing over the airfield at regular intervals.
21 July. Between 0745 and 1730, aircraft practiced diving at targets in the Hasenberg area. The planes approached from a southeasterly direction. Each plane approached four times. Flying in formations of three aircraft was also seen. At about 1800, one Il-28 took off. Between 2105 and 2330, there was night air activity including local flights lasting for 8 to 10 minutes each.
22 July. Between 0730 and 1630, jet fighters practiced flying in the vicinity of the airfield. A scramble was observed at 1530. A yellow star flare was fired and the alert flight took off 45 seconds later. Two elements of two jet fighters took off in rapid succession. One aircraft of the second element was apparently damaged because it did not take off but taxied to the runway end. The other jet fighters followed the first element of two and the aircraft assembled to a formation of three. The planes made a local flight and then landed individually. Between 2000 and 2400, there was night air activity while searchlights were in operation.

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23 July. Between 0900 and 1320, individual flights in and above the clouds were practiced. At 1600, the following aircraft were parked at the airfield:

36 jet fighters
4 Yak-11s
3 Po-2s
1 Il-28

24 July. There was no air activity.

25 July. Between 0815 and 1750, individual flights at altitudes of about 7,000 meters were made. Vapor trails were observed. From 2115 until about 0300, there was night air activity including target approaches while searchlights were in operation.

26 July. Between 0930 and 1545, jet fighters made attacks at altitudes of about 3,000 meters. The attacks were made from the rear at an angle of about 30 degrees. Between 1850 and 2100, jet fighters fired at sleeve targets.

27 July. Between 0915 and about 1600, individual aircraft practiced high-altitude flights. At 2100, there was night air activity while searchlights were in operation.

28 July. Between 0900 and 1800, aircraft made dives and local flights in the vicinity of the airfield. At 1745, one Yak-14 landed. At 1755, a Po-2 landed.

29 July. Only some jet fighters took off.

30 and 31 July. There was no air activity.

1 August. Between 0720 and 1730, air combat was practiced and attacks were made from the rear at an angle of 30 degrees against an aircraft used for target representation. Flying in elements of two was also observed. At 2010, there was night air activity while searchlights were in operation.

2 August. Between 0800 and 1800, there was air activity including flying in elements of two aircraft and diving. Between 2000 and 2110, elements of two planes practiced flying at a high altitude. At 2110, there was night air activity while searchlights were in operation. The aircraft used for target representation had set its position while the attacking aircraft had no lights.

5 August. Between 0730 and 1730, individual jet fighters made local flights. Partially, the planes broke through the overcast and came down in cloudless spaces. Between 2100 and 2300, there was night air activity including firing at sleeve targets. The sleeve target was illuminated by three searchlights. The towing aircraft flew without position lights. Each aircraft made 3 to 4 attacks. Four attacks were only made when the plane had not fired at the target during the first three approaches. The towing aircraft was equipped with auxiliary fuel tanks and remained aloft for 85 to 90 minutes. Attacks were made from the right rear section.

6 August. Between 0730 and 1300, four jet fighters took off individually. No other air activity was observed.

7 August. There was no air activity.

8 August. Between 0745 and 1320, only individual local flights were observed.

9 August. At 1300, formation flights at an altitude of about 1,500 meters were observed. Firing at air sleeves was practiced in the Hasenberg area. Attacks against the target were made in formations. Three jet fighters flew in echelon formation to the right and attacked the sleeve target from the right rear section but only the leading aircraft fired on the sleeves. After the attack was completed, the aircraft peeled off, remained in the echelon formation to the right and repeated attacking. At 2100, firing at sleeve targets was practiced. At 2245, air activity was terminated.

10 August. Only four flights lasting 10 minutes each were observed during the whole day.

11 August. Between 0700 and 1730, there was air activity including flying in formations of four aircraft and aerobatics. All known aerobatic figures were practiced with the exception of turns. Between 2030 and 2330, there was night air activity. Attacks were made while searchlights were in operation. All aircraft flew without position lights.

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12 August. Between 0730 and 1630, jet fighters practiced flying in elements of two and aerobatics.

13 August. Between 0800 and 1330, formation flying was practiced and attacks were made against an Il-28 by elements of two aircraft.

17 August. Between 0830 and 1700, jet fighters practiced flying in elements of two and four in the vicinity of the airfield. At 1800, 38 jet fighters, 24 of which were apparently MiG-17s, 14 MiG-15s, 1 Il-28, 1 Li-2, 6 Yak-11s, 4 Po-2s, and 1 Yak-14 were observed at the taxiway. Between 2030 and 2200, only individual night flights were made while searchlights were in operation. It was observed that the alert flight consisted of MiG-17s.

3. The Token radar set remained unchanged at the northern edge of the airfield. This set was continuously in operation during air activity. When Il-28s approached the number of revolutions of the Token set increased. The Kniferest radar set remained unchanged at the southern edge of the field, east of the athletic grounds near the Klappgraben Brook. This set was generally in operation when Il-28s and Yak-11s made local flights. The Fishnet set remained unchanged on a small artificial hill 100 to 140 meters east of the Token set. Since 10 August, a radio truck with rake-like antenna on its roof was parked about 300 meters southwest of the eastern runway and between runway and taxiway. The prongs of the rake-like antenna projected upward and downward. So far, no rotations of this antenna could be observed.²

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4. The following air activity and aircraft were observed at Neuruppin airfield between 21 July and 3 August:
- 21 July. At 0600, an alert formation of 5 jet fighters took off. Later on it was observed that four jet fighters dived from an altitude of 1,000 meters and attacked ground targets. Approaches were made individually. Approaches without firing against sleeve targets were made at an altitude of about 1,000 meters in the Wulkow-Zippelsfoerde air space.
- 1 August. At 0930, seven jet fighters were towed by trucks to the eastern runway end. These jet fighters seemed to be newly manufactured. At about 2000, the seven jet fighters took off in rapid succession. After a short time, a rotating searchlight was switched on at the airfield.
- 2 August. Between 0900 and 1400, jet fighters with auxiliary fuel tanks and sleeve targets practiced flying at an altitude of 900 to 1,000 meters in the Wulkow-Zippelsfoerde-Krangen-Alt Ruppin area. The planes remained abft for about 45 minutes. During air activity, jet fighters approached the sleeve target two times coming from the right and two times from the left at the same altitude. After having completed the approaches, the attacking aircraft landed at the airfield and the next plane took off immediately. After about 45 minutes, the towing aircraft crossed over the airfield, dropped the target and landed after circling the area. About 30 minutes later, the next jet fighter with sleeve target took off.
- For refueling purposes, the jet fighters were towed by truck to the southeastern corner of the airfield and parked near the hangars where they were then refueled. In addition to approaches against sleeve targets, individual flights above the clouds lasting for about 45 minutes were observed. There was a 6/10 overcast at an altitude of 1,500 meters. Between 1930 until after midnight, approaches against an illuminated jet fighter were practiced. The plane used for target representation took off from east to west, crossed in a large left circle over the town of Neuruppin as far as the eastern turning point and then returned to the field. From the eastern turning point, the target plane flashed to the field and was immediately caught by the ground searchlight at the western turning apron of the field and by the ground searchlight at Nietwerder. The illuminated target plane was approached by another jet fighter, twice from the right side and twice from the left side, at the same altitude. These four approaches were made on a stretch of about 6 km. Then both searchlights were switched off. The target aircraft turned and approached the field from the west, gave flashes, and was again picked up by the searchlights. On its return flight the target plane was again approached by the attacking plane four times. These exercises were continuously made until after midnight. The ground searchlight on the eastern apron of the runway was only temporarily used for illuminating the target jet fighter and mostly for illuminating the runway during landings. During the same time, two to three jet fighters made individual flights at altitudes of 500 to 600 meters. Each aircraft circled widely in the vicinity of the airfield for 15 to 20 minutes.¹

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5. It was observed that guards at and around Neuruppin airfield were strengthened. Sentries with field glasses were repeatedly seen at windows and eyelets searching the vicinity of the airfield. Sentries outside the airfield were now posted at less conspicuous places.²

6. The following air activity was observed:
22 July. At 0500, alert was sounded by a siren. A total of 19 jet fighters were towed by trucks to the runway. At 0630, the alert was terminated and the planes were again towed to the southeastern corner of the taxiway and parked there. Between 1845 and 1900, 16 jet fighters were seen at the runway. Between 2000 and about midnight, there was night air activity including individual take-offs.

23 July. Between 0900 and about 1300, there was air activity.

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7. The following air activity and aircraft were observed:

2, 4, and 8 August. There was air activity at Neuruppin airfield. About 36 to 38 jet fighters including the aircraft involved in air activity could be observed.

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11 August. Jet fighters practiced formation flying and aerobatics at high altitudes.

Since about late July, two jet fighters with a red stripe, about 20 cm wide, on their tail units were almost continually observed at the southeastern corner of the airfield.¹

8. It was observed on 11 August that the Token radar set remained unchanged at the northern edge of the taxiway south of the fuel depot. The Fishnet radar set was observed east of the Token set. The Kniferest radar set was located at the southern edge of the taxiway near the Klappgraben Brook. A radio truck with an antenna on its roof was permanently parked between runway and taxiway. The antenna consisted of vertical rods. A steel mast, 15 to 18 meters high, with five bracings was seen east of the Fishnet set at the northern edge of the runway. Another steel mast with two bracings, about 6 meters high, was located in the most eastern revetment at the northeastern corner of the taxiway. A radio truck was observed near the latter steel mast.²

1. Comment. Neuruppin airfield is believed to be still occupied by one fighter regiment. Intensive air activity with night and day firing practices formation flights, air attack exercises, and attacks against Il-28s were observed during the period under review. A total of 38 jet fighters, 24 of which were apparently MiG-17s and 14 MiG-15s, were counted at the taxiway.

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2. Comment. The previously reported plane aerial at the southern edge of the taxiway near the Klappgraben Brook was apparently again replaced by the Kniferest radar set. The radio truck with the Rus-II-like dipole antenna cannot yet be determined. This radar installation was presumably used as high-lift device for bad-weather approaches. Other information of the present report corresponded with previous information.

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3. Comment. Intensified guards and isolation of airfields in East Germany was repeatedly reported during the last months.

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